UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

(Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Editor, 1880-1918)

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Francis Neilson Louis L. Mann Curtis W. Reese

A Boarding-House Humanist

By FRANK CARLETON DOAN

The Story of My Experiments with Truth

Part III, Chapter VI. By M. K. GANDHI

Ponsonby and Peace

By CURTIS W. REESE

Why We Are Weary

By KATE RICHARDS O'HARE

Shall Massachusetts Commit Judicial Murder?

By ELIZABETH GLENDOWER EVANS

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UNITY

"HE HATH MADE OF ONE ALL NATIONS OF MEN"

VOLUME XCIX MONDAY, MAY 16, 1927 NUMBER 11

A HYMN FOR TEACHERS

As to the seer in ancient time
The angel came with coal aflame,
And touched his lips that he might speak,
O God, in thine almighty name,—
So to us in this later day
Send down a purifying ray.

Put forth thy hand and touch our mouths,—
Whose holy task it is to teach
And guide the minds of eager youth,—
That we may have inspiring speech.
Grant us vast patience, insight wise,
The open mind and heart and eyes.

Thus cleansed and quickened may we go
And teach those in the morn of life
The beauty and the might of peace,
The sin and ugliness of strife.
Then shall the angel's voice proclaim
"You too have spoken in God's name."

MARGUERITE EMILIO.

M. Briand, Foreign Minister of France, has come out for the Outlawry of War. Using this very phrase which, he says, has become current in America, he declared in a recent speech, all too inadequately reported in the press, that "France is willing to enter into an agreement with America mutually *outlawing war.*" It will "engage itself with the United States," he continued, "to put war as between the two countries *outside the pale of the law.*" Than these two sentences there can be nothing more explicit. We count their utterance by so influential a leader in international affairs to be the most important victory yet achieved by Mr. Levinson and his campaign. Here is a perfectly definite suggestion, by an entirely practical and utterly responsible man, to outlaw war forever and completely as between two of the leading nations of the world. Many outlawry advocates, to be sure, have always visualized their program in terms of a universal and all-inclusive treaty which should ban war by joint action of governments the world around. But there is no reason why this action should not be anticipated and prepared for by such action as is here proposed by M. Briand for two powers like France and the United States. Indeed, certain smaller countries—Norway, Sweden, Uruguay—have already written outlawry treaties, and the principle lies at the very heart of the famous Locarno pact between France and Germany. Despite the doubts and sneers of men like President Lowell, of Harvard, who will not see in the idea of outlawry anything but the wild chimeras of fanatics, the program is marching on. M. Briand's proposal is only one more and to date the most important demonstration of the fact that it constitutes the one sure foundation of enduring peace. Once again UNITY takes satisfaction in remembering that it has urged the Outlawry of War from the beginning, and has thus presented to its readers the one sure remedy for the world's greatest ill.

On Friday, April 29th, there sailed into New York harbor "the largest assemblage of American naval vessels ever to enter the Port." According to the official list, the fleet consisted of one hundred and twenty-two ships of war, manned by more than thirty thousand men. Among these ships were eleven battleships, sixty destroyers, one armored cruiser, three light cruisers, ten submarines, one air-craft tender, three destroyer tenders, three submarine tenders, three minesweepers, six mine layers, and twenty-one vessels of the Fleet Base Force. Thirteen admirals, vice-admirals, and rear admirals headed the personnel of the fleet, which mustered over two thousand officers of various grades. From the moment of the arrival of these warships, festivities were the order of the day. Sailors swarmed the streets, in quest of excitement and pleasure. Officers were feted at hotels and private houses. Public receptions, parades, dances, special baseball games, night illuminations, etc., kept the populace agog, and the newspapers filled with so-called "news." The whole thing was another one of those grand debauches by means of which, every year or so, the nation keeps its great metropolis crazed on the subject of war and preparedness for war. After sixteen days of this kind of orgy, a pacifist has about as much chance of being heard in the city as a sane man in a lunatic asylum, and the cause of peace is dead for another twelve-month. All of which makes us supremely thankful that the United States is a continental country, and most of its population, therefore, wholly inaccessible to the demoralization of a fleet visitation! If America is still on the whole a peaceful nation, if the great stretches west of the Hudson to the Rockies are inert on the subject of arms, it is because the navy can't get at them —and there aren't enough soldiers to divide around. Happy the people who can't see their navy—those monstrous floating machines of death! Some day they will

be scrapped, along with the racks and screws of the Middle Ages, and the future will ask of us, as we ask of the past, "Why weren't they civilized?"

The tragedies of human misery and loss in the lower Mississippi Valley are not assuaged, before the fertile and practical American mind casts about for devices by which to insure that "it shall never happen again." Along with discriminating comment of engineers, there is much patter of the tyro. Wiseacres take occasion to renew their prediction that the stripping of our forests will bring us to the damnation bow-wows. As a matter of fact the present flood has about as much relation to the cutting of forests in the upper Mississipi as have the canals on Mars. The water causing the devastation in the south came from elsewhere, as any one might know who has watched the weather reports. At certain points along the Mississippi the flood of 1844 surpassed the present. Yet the axe had done little to alter the "state of nature" along the upper Mississippi at that time. Those who have never lived on this mighty river, or one of its scarcely less mighty tributaries, can have no appreciation of what happens during flood periods. Inhabitants of the Atlantic seaboard, of New England, of the Adirondacks, or of any section of the Appalachians, are familiar with a terrain which supplies no insight upon the topography of the great central valley. The east is an old land. It was made ages ago. Its water courses have found bed rock, or gurgle, clear and sparkling through masses of glacial detritus, or slink away into coast-line salt marshes. The Mississippi flows through a land still in the making. The river itself has been one of the most potent forces in making the land what it is. It will doubtless continue to be a potent force in making it what it is going to be. Most of its tributaries are brown or red or black with silt. The largest is aptly called "The Big Muddy." Senator Ingalls, of Kansas, used to complain of the Missouri River, that it was too thick to drink and too thin to plow. The problem of the Mississippi can be solved by neither damming nor damning. It is the job of the engineer, and he must learn the arts of the great engineer, the mighty river itself.

Will Rogers says there is more heart-thrill in the spectacle of one small family clinging to the roof of their humble cottage, drifting with the tawny tide of the Mississippi, than in all the corset salesmen, the Henry Judd Grays, in the world. Yet, as he points out, more newspaper correspondents and photographers are concentrated on Long Island, watching, describing and photographing the slightest facial contortions of a single corset salesman, than there are along the banks of the raging Mississippi. And all because this corset salesman has demonstrated himself to be among the most disgusting paramours and cowardly murderers on record. The low-lived degenerate, battering his drugged and sleeping victim over the head with a slug of pig-iron, and savagely strangling the already dead with a wire tourniquet, is the adorable "sheik" who holds the eye of many a gum-chewing flapper as she peruses her favorite tabloid. It is hard to draw the moral from a situation like this. Most of us will probably give it up in disgust along with the eminent comedian who fails to find joke-stuff in it. But something is to be got from thinking on through one's disgust. The flapper who can continue to idealize such a coward, and "get a kick" out of the story of his amours, is going to outlaw herself even in the society of gum-chewers. Girls simply will not stand for this sort of thing. It is too raw. It is too nasty. It is impossible even among morons. It will not be surprising if the Gray-Snyder murder trial precipitates a revival of Victorian morality. Prudishness is glorified in contrast. Many a youngster, out of his own impulses, will conclude, "If this is emancipation, give me Puritan bondage." Freedom is precious. Youth will not surrender its liberties lightly. Such disgusting excesses as this trial is bringing to light will reveal to the young, as might not the most eloquent preachment, the glory of conquered passions and of pure love.

The New York theatre "padlock" law, which gives the authorities power to lock up for a year any theatre which has housed a play convicted in the courts for indecency, is causing an awful howl among the liberals. This is censorship of the worst kind, they say—and so it is! So they are damning with fresh and exuberant vigor all the Puritanical reformers and "smut-hounds" who have been warning against dirt upon the stage. But why denounce these "rounders of the Lord," to quote the phrase applied to the late Anthony Comstock? They are not responsible for the "padlock" law. The only persons responsible are the theatre-managers themselves, who made their theatres something worse than bawdy-houses, for the sake of the money there was in it, and at last stirred up an outburst of public wrath which has now turned and madly overwhelmed them. It's the "insiders" who work their own ruin every time. Look at Prohibition, for example! How long would it have taken the simon-pure Prohibitionists to achieve their goal, had it not been for the liquor-men who made the saloon a stench in the nostrils of all decent men? It was only when the drive against alcohol was aimed straight and true at the saloon, that Prohibition went over. The saloon-keepers, in other words, were the ones who did most to make this country "dry." The same thing seems about to happen with smoking. Cigars and cigarettes are innocent enough, perhaps, in their place. Let us concede this point, at any rate! But what about the invasion of the smoking habit into every dining-room, every public assembly, even every church? What

about the deliberate attempt of the tobacco interests to force their wares upon our boys and girls? What about the flood of advertising which swamps our newspapers, inundates our lovely country-side, and covers our city streets? Smokers are outrageously abusing their privileges, as we have pointed out before in these columns, and they will in due time bring ruin upon themselves if they do not learn discretion. Reformers, after all, need never worry. All they have to do is to leave the forces of evil alone, to do what they will, and they straightway hang themselves with their own rope.

In our issue of Monday, April 25th last, we published in full (page 131) a statement by the *American Hebrew* on better understanding between Catholics, Protestants and Jews. We hope that this statement attracted the attention of our readers, for it embodied an idea of the first importance to the religious and social welfare of this country. "Considerable progress has been made throughout America," says the *American Hebrew,* "in organizing goodwill and better understanding among the religious groups of our citizenship." Nevertheless, occasions of distrust and antagonism are constantly appearing. The Catholics came under fire some years ago when the alleged oath of the Knights of Columbus was discussed in Congress. The Ku Klux Klan ravaged American life with discord and hate for more than five years, and is still doing its full work in isolated sections of the country, with little counteracting influence at hand When Henry Ford revived the silly enormity of the "Elders of Zion," the Jews at serious disadvantage, were left to defend themselves With such "emergencies of misrepresentation, false accusation, groundless attack" liable to occur at any time, and thus to "arouse the slumbering emotions of bitterness and hate, of turmoil and rancor, of pain and discord," what better thing could be done than to establish a permanent body of right-minded men to stand on duty, like a fire department in a great city, to fight and quench the fires of bigotry whenever they break out and threaten a conflagration? It is just this which Dr. Isaac Landmann, Editor of the *American Hebrew,* proposes in his statesmanlike program for a "Permanent Commission on Better Understanding," to be composed of Catholics, Protestants and Jews. This Commission, free of all private religious views or doctrines, is to be limited to this function:

> whenever a group of American citizens comes before the Commission claiming that it is attacked unjustly and on grounds that are ill-founded; that the attack is calculated to engender ill-will and breed hate, with no redress under law or at the hands of the Government, the Permanent Commission on Better Understanding shall investigate, ascertain and enunciate the truth, create and voice public opinion on the subject.

The *American Hebrew* has enlisted impressive support of its proposal. Men like S. Parkes Cadman, Father Francis Duffy, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, have undertaken to organize the Commission. Its success will mark a long step toward the fulfillment of the ideal which UNITY has cherished from the beginning.

A Boarding-House Humanist

"The foolish of the world hath God chosen,
That He may confound the wise."

I

In a recent issue of UNITY we wrote of the religion of children to show how instinctively humanistic, that is to say, simple, direct and true, it is. This week we write to show how unspoiled adults have the same instinctive understanding of the deep things of life. And here again, as in the former editorial, we shall scrupulously avoid using any abstract philosophical vehicle to carry our point, but shall rely upon a single concrete instance to bear us out. Let us only say in passing that our point in both editorials is that this "humanism" we hear so much of these days is *not a system of philosophy to be expounded but a way truth to be lived;* and that it is the part of wisdom for the humanist himself in defending his position to avoid the deadening arguments of the "Schools" and turn rather to living people,—the child in his home or the man in the street,—for a confirmation of this humane faith that is in him. Humanism is not a case for much "learning": that is liable to make a man "mad." It is a case for "mother-wit," as it is called, that will make a man "wise."

For some years now we have summered up among the hills of New Hampshire. Many's the time we have sat at the feet of the native "wits" up there and learned of the practical wisdom which is theirs. Nowhere else have we ever found such a fund of unconscious, uncalculating truth as is in this "transcendental Yankeeism" of these typical New England tillers of the soil.[1]

II

Take for illustration the story of the "boarding-house humanist," as we always call him. . . . By some strange misadventure the son of one of these native wits—a typical "son of his father!"—found himself thrown in with a tableful of young theologues in the boarding-house connected with a small very orthodox Church College. At every meal his fellow-boarders had "much argument about this and about that," but, as it seemed to his unspoiled mind, they "evermore came out by the same door wherein they went." Day after day they hotly debated the exact meaning in the

(1) We had thought to give several instances selected from our collection of cases of their "mother-wit." But our limited space confines us to one only. We have chosen that one which is most pat to our immediate purpose.

Greek and in the Hebrew of the word "God."[2] The world of "phenomena" was contrasted with the world of "noumena" to the discredit of the former. Time and space were tracked down to their lairs, the one in eternity, the other in ubiquity. *Homoousian* and *homoiousian* differences bifurcated them into two branches of theology. ("Like Tweedledee and Tweedledum," thought the farmers son, sighing inwardly.) And so on *ad nauseam.*

Well, one Saturday night the argument waxed hotter than ever. One of the theologues, a senior, was going to preach the following day on "The Knowledge of God." One of the under classmen had promptly raised the question, "What *is* knowledge, anyway?" Instantly the theologues were all off baying on the trail of some little elusive creatures named "Epistemology." In no time the dining room seemed fairly filled with the dust they were kicking up in the air! Our young country wit weathered the storm as well as he could in silence. But finally—by this time the argument had turned on the question not whether we can know God but whether he knows us and can and does answer our human prayers, or do we answer our own prayers?—there was a lull in the whirlwind of controversy, a respectful pause following some final pronouncement by the senior Theologue, and out of the silence the voice of the neglected farmer's son drawled out, "Well, if that's so, *pray pass the beans!*"[3] Even the theologues, it must be said in all fairness, were still young enough to be amused by this sudden and unexpected intrusion of his very practical needs into their purely theoretical arguments; his phenomenal appetite for beans into their vain seeking after the unappetizing things of a noumenal world; his substantial hunger into their passing discussion of scholastic *substantia;* his natural mother-wit into the affected, foolish and hair-splitting distinctions of *homoousian* from *homoiousian;* in short, his human common sense into their inhuman non-sense.

Mother-Wit! Native Wisdom! Theology, one may suppose, is useful enough in its way and in its proper time and place; though just when and where or how we confess we have never been able to discover.[4] But after all is said, *theology passes no beans!* It doesn't feed any hungry soul, heal any broken heart, ease any disturbed mind. To preach on Sunday the meaning of God in the ancient Greek or Hebrew doesn't help a single soul to live like a God on Monday. To speak of homoousia and homoiousia doesn't put any of the spirit of Jesus into the man in the pew. And what cares he about eternity and ubiquity? He is trying the best he humanly can to find something divine in the here and the now.

III

The way to truth is not to be learned from any deep-sounding principles of Epistemology. It is not to be conned out of some weighty volume of metaphysics. In the last analysis it lies in the direction our instincts lead us, our "hunches," as the modern man puts it. It is what the ancients called "wisdom." And it is plainly to be seen on all sides in the lives of little children and of the so-called "foolish of the world." These have tried out life at first hand and they know the way, the way of secret understanding.

This we understand to be the really practical point in the method which is called Pragmatism, this the working spirit of the pilosophy called Humanism. With all these garments of truth ready made, these garments in which people of childlike mind everywhere are clothing their simple lives, it is a sad sight to behold certain pedantic humanists these days busily dressing up their philosophy in the outworn habiliments of the old-fashioned absolutists and rationalists; masquerading in scholastic garb; using the schoolman's terminology, aping his style, parading in his categories; wasting their hours trying to prove to the whole world that a humanist is not what he undisguisedly is—simple-minded, foolish, ignorant, childlike, but is a first rate *thinker!* Sad to behold them frantically intent upon proving that a humanist can be just as scholarly as the schoolman, just as rational as the rationalist, just as knowing as the gnostic! It would be positively laughable if it were not at the same time rather pathetic, this vigor with which a humanist of this pettifogging sort sets up a God of straw to knock down. Doesn't he know that no simple-hearted man, no man of any mother-wisdom in him, believes any longer in *that* kind of God, that graven image of a God he is at such pains to demolish?[5] Doesn't he know that that Absolute has long since crumbled into the dust along with all earthly absolute kings and potentates?

Alas, why cannot the humanist be himself,—his own natural childlike,—if you will, foolish self but democratic? In his search for the truth why does he stop by the way and beat the air about the already vanished errors of the past? In his search for truth why does he not go ahead and follow his sure *instinct* for the truth?—frankly and unashamedly saying with Pascal, "The heart has its reasons which reason knows not"[6] or retort with Amiel, "This may be logical but it is not the truth!"[7]? Why does not the humanist, of all

(2) One is reminded of the two missionaries who quarreled over what word to use for "God" in the joint work of translating the Bible into the native tongue of a South Sea Island tribe and who for eight years thereafter lived in bitter enmity at opposite ends of the Islands!

(3) The reader should remember this happened on a Saturday night in New England, a time and place dedicated by long and sacred tradition to beans!

(4) The story goes that Edward Everett Hale once said, "God is everywhere!" Then reflecting a moment he added, "Yes, everywhere. Or at least everywhere except in a theological school!" Bill Simpson is a case in point. (See *Unity* March 14, 21 and April 25.) The theologians, we presume, will pick his *idea* of God all to pieces. So will certain of the humanities, more's the pity! His idea of God *is* almost too good, too simple, too instinctive, to be true. But, just the same, if these system-makers would only forget their cunning for a season and follow after Bill Simpson's wisdom, letting his poor reasoning go for the time being, they would return to their "Studies" with a keener and truer appetite for the Eternal Truth, the truth which is first of all *human.*

(5) Indeed it may be doubted whether any real live man ever did believe in the theologian's awful abstraction of a God.

(6) "Thoughts," p. 306 (Bohn Library Edition).

(7) "Journal," p. 50, cf. p. 10. "It is difficult for liberty to return to the frank unity of instinct."

people on the face of the earth, exercise his *will* and *believe?* . . .

IV

"But, wait a minute!" some logic-chopping reader will cry. "Surely we must learn to discriminate between truth and error, or, if you prefer, between *degrees* of truth? No wise parent or teacher allows the child to follow his instincts. We teach our children the wisdom we have learned through the years, a wisdom that cannot be got except by experience. We discipline our child. We forbid him, lovingly but sternly, to take for truth whatever happens to 'work,' to serve his momentary whims. We interfere deliberately, and again sternly, with the free operation even of his religious instincts, not allowing him without question to follow any kind of God, or no-God he has a fancy to take after. And as for mother-wit, it is true the 'foolish of the world' often hit the nail on the head. But even they have to have *some* sort of aim or else they are liable to miss the nail altogether, or hit the wrong nail, or, to use Chesterton's quip, to hit the right nail on the head but with the wrong hammer! If this be humanism, this accepting without question the 'reasons of the heart,' this running after whatever we happen to like and loudly calling it the truth, this following in whatever course our common sense may prompt us to go, even though our better reason counsels no,—then give us by preference the coldest and most rigorous brand of rationalism to go by."

Our logic-chopping friend raises a fair question and a truly profound. Our reply, alas, will have to be so brief as to seem inconclusive, not to say unfair. To avoid a possible and unnecessary misunderstanding, however, let us attempt to answer his question in a single paragraph.

Humanism does rely quite frankly upon the instinctive side of our human nature to see us through this cross-puzzle of a world, upon the motive and emotive processes the new psychology is making so much of these days. But humanism is not therefore that apotheosis of irrationalism which its scandalized opponents seem to take it for. The humanist believes in criticism, in discipline of mind; he does truly, as much so as the veriest rationalist. But he believes in criticizing the *facts,*—the data of experience. He believes in submitting, as a matter of common sense, as a matter of wisdom, to these facts. But he makes of criticism and discipline not a primary function of the human mind, as does the rationalist, but a secondary. He believes in fitting his life to the facts of life, not in hammering his life into some abstract theory of life. He believes that the best, if not the only way, of arriving at a sensible, working understanding of the truth about life is not by any method of "ratiocination" but by this method of "trial and error." This is the way of the empirical sciences. It is also the way in which children and unspoiled adults come at the truth and live by it in this workaday world.

FRANK CARLETON DOAN.

Jottings

It is the opinion of President Coolidge that "an American press which has all the privileges which it enjoys under our institutions—ought to be first of all American." We do not agree! It is the duty of the American press to be "first of all" not American but *right*.

The new English battleship, "Nelson," costs only $35,000,000. Yet England can't pay her debts! Who wants better proof than this that the human race is insane?

The death of the "Official Spokesman" marks the passing of the most ridiculous myth that ever flourished in Washington. Conceived by Wilson, cultivated by Harding and Coolidge, it grew to proportions too monstrous—and too silly—to be endured. But watch now for its successors! "Information from highest quarters . . ."—"it is reported at the White House . . ." —"an official close to the President said today . . .", etc., etc., are the phrases which will now parade through our Washington despatches. Sometime we may again have a president like Lincoln who, when he had something to say, said it himself.

Politicians are beginning to explain that Governor Smith is not so "wet," after all. These same politicians are beginning to see, in other words, that Smith's wetness is the one great obstacle on his road to the presidency. Yet we are still told that everybody is against the 18th Amendment!

The recent visit of Saklatvala, the Communist M.P., to Gandhi, already referred to in this place, has resulted in what might be expected. Saklatvala has ferociously attacked the Mahatma. "Politically," he says, "your career is ruinous, and from a humanitarian point of view its degenerating influence appears to me a moral plague. . . ." Saklatvala criticizes Gandhi particularly for objecting to the class war and violent revolution. Here is new evidence that the Bolsheviki and the Indian non-resistants are poles apart. Yet the non-resistant here in America is invariably denounced as a Bolshevik!

Governor Ritchie, of Maryland, states that the average man appears to regard politics as a game rather than as a struggle for principle. Upon our word and honor, we never imagined that "the average man" was so intelligent.

J. H. H.

The Story of My Experiments with Truth

[The Autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi]

(Copyrighted, 1927)

PART III—CHAPTER VI

Spirit of Service

I was getting on well with my profession, but that was far from satisfying to me. The question of further simplifying my life and of doing some concrete act of service to my fellowmen had been constantly agitating me, when a leper came to my door. I had it not in my heart to dismiss him with a meal. So I offered him shelter, also dressed his wounds, and began to look after him. But I could not go on like that indefinitely. I could not afford, and I lacked the will, to keep him with me indefinitely. So I sent him to the Government Hospital for indentured laborers.

But I was still ill at ease. I longed for some humanitarian work of a permanent nature. Dr. Booth was the head of the St. Aidan's Mission. He was a kind-hearted man and treated his patients free. Thanks to Parsi Rustomji's charities, it was possible to open a small charitable hospital under Dr. Booth's charge. I felt strongly inclined to serve as a nurse in this hospital. The work of dispensing medicines took from one to two hours daily, and I made up my mind to find that time from my office-work, to be able to fill the place of a compounder in the dispensary attached to the hospital. Most of my professional work was chamber work, conveyancing and arbitration. I of course used to have a few cases in the magistrate's court, but most of them would be of a non-controversial character and Mr. Khan, who had followed me to South Africa and was then living with me, undertook to take them if I was absent. So I found time to serve in the small hospital. This meant two hours every morning including the time taken in going to and from the hospital. This work brought me some peace. It consisted in ascertaining the patient's complaints, laying the facts before the doctor and dispensing the prescriptions. It brought me in close touch with suffering Indians, most of them indentured Tamil, Telugu or North India men.

The experience stood me in good stead when during the Boer War I offered my services for nursing the sick and wounded soldiers.

The question of the upbringing of children had been ever before me. I had two sons born in South Africa, and my service in the hospital was useful to me in solving the question of their upbringing. My independent spirit was a constant source of trial to me. My wife and I had decided to have the best medical aid at the time of her delivery, but if the doctor and the nurse were to leave us in the lurch at the right moment, what was I to do? Then the nurse had to be an Indian. And the difficulty of getting a trained Indian nurse in South Africa can be easily imagined from the similar difficulty in India. So I studied the things necessary for safe labor. I read Dr. Tribhuvandas' book, "*Ma ne Shikhaman*" (Advice to a Mother), and I nursed both my children according to the instructions given in the book, tempered where necessary by such experience as I had gained elsewhere. The services of a nurse were availed of—not more than two months each time—principally for helping my wife, and not for taking care of the babies, which I did myself.

The birth of the last child put me to the severest test. The travail came on all of a sudden. The doctor was not immediately available, and some time was lost in fetching the midwife. Even if she had been on the spot, she could not have helped delivery. I had to see through the safe delivery of the baby. My careful study of the subject in Dr. Tribhuvandas' work was of inestimable help. I was not nervous. I am convinced that for the proper upbringing of children the parents ought to have a general knowledge of the care and nursing of babies.

At every step I have seen the advantages of my careful study of the subject. My children would not have enjoyed the general health that they do today, had I not studied the subject and turned my knowledge to account. We labor under a sort of superstition that the child has nothing to learn during the first five years of its age. On the contrary the fact is that the child never learns in after life what it does in its first five years. The education of the child begins with conception. The physical and mental states of the parents at the moment of conception are reproduced in the baby. Then during the period of pregnancy it continues to be affected by the mother's moods, desires and temperament as also by her ways of life. After birth the child imitates the parents, and for a considerable number of years entirely depends on them for its growth.

The couple that realize these things will never have sexual union for the fulfillment of their lust, but will unite only when they desire issue. I think it is the height of ignorance to believe that the sexual act is an independent function necessary like sleeping or eating. The world depends for its existence on the act of generation, and as the world is the play-ground of God and a reflection of His glory, the act of generation should be controlled for the ordered growth of the world. He who realizes this, will control his lust at any cost, will equip himself with the knowledge necessary for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of his progeny, and give the benefit of that knowledge to posterity.

M. K. Gandhi.

(*Translated from Navajivan by Mahadeo Desai.*)

Ponsonby and Peace

The American friends of Arthur Ponsonby, M.P., and all who are interested in peace, will be glad to know that on March 17 Mr. Ponsonby took another step in the direction of No More War when he spoke in Parliament in behalf of his motion to reduce the Air Force by 33,000 men, thus in effect calling for the practical abolition of the Air Force and the ultimate abolition of the Army and Navy as well. Ministers and Members sat up and took notice. A Tory member, Mr. Duff Cooper by name, while not voting with the twenty-four who supported the motion, spoke vigorously against the crime and futility of war.

Mr. Ponsonby took the offensive from the very first by saying, "I am taking the standpoint this afternoon of abolition, and I want the House to consider it more seriously than it has had the opportunity of doing hitherto." He wanted his country to try the "path of disarmament by example" with the "idea of reaching disarmament by general international consent." Continuing he said, "Armaments are supposed to serve two purposes and these two purposes are very often confused. The first purpose of armaments is to give security against a successful attack by an enemy. I am prepared to admit that may be so. The second purpose of armaments is to give us security against war. That, I, for one, absolutely deny." He then quoted Lord Cecil of Chelwood in support of his contention. Lord Cecil had recently said:

> Take the Air. There were symptoms that this or that country was increasing its Air Force for no other reason than that the Air Force of some neighboring country was already greater than its own. No one could complain of that, but it was exactly the reason which led to the gigantic competition in armaments before the War, and, though he would hesitate to say that was the sole cause of the late War, no one could deny that the state of mind produced by armaments competition prepared the soil on which grew up the terrible plant which ultimately fruited in the Great War.

Mr. Ponsonby expressed himself to the effect that the "existence of armaments is a menace to civilization," that "the governments of the world seem to have learned nothing by the great failure of force from 1914-1918," that "no object for which we were told we were fighting was achieved," that the World War "was not a war to make the world safe for democracy" nor "for small nationalities."

After summing up the War and post-War periods as four years of effort to beat Germany to her knees, followed by four years of effort to lift her up again, Ponsonby exclaimed "Could imbecility go further than this?" He then disposed of that foolish question frequently directed at Pacifists, "What would you do if somebody with a knife came along and wanted to murder your wife?" by saying, "I should knock him down." He then added that "there is no analogy between an individual criminal and a nation."

The closing paragraph of Mr. Ponsonby's address on this memorable occasion was born in part of his American journey. He said:

> In a recent visit to America, I was enormously and profoundly struck by the vast foreign population living in that wonderful Continent—the hundreds of thousands of Italians, Germans, Czechoslovaks, Scandinavians, Irish, Negroes, all races, living together, mingling together, in amity, in unity, in co-operation, without any difficulty at all. Why? Because they have not got Governments to egg them on one against the other; because their natural feeling of brotherhood is allowed to express itself; in that great Continent, they can give us a lesson of internationalism which we could have learned, too, if the Government would only be inspired by the spirit which lies deep down in the moral sense of the people. Few may support me today, but we few will be representing a very large body of opinion outside the House, as I have reason to know—a body of opinion which demands that we should take the lead in this matter, that we should come forward with a direct proposal for disarming ourselves, and that thereby we should make civilization secure for posterity, otherwise we are laying up for posterity something that our imagination refuses to accept. I make this apeal to the Government and to the House in all parts. I believe the only way is the way of example. If you are confident that you are right, and if you are confident that what is right is also expedient, if you know you can release the burden from your people and spend it in far more fruitful ways, there is no power that can be successful against you, however evilly disposed or diabolically equipped. It is because I believe this way is the best way and the way implied in this Amendment is the way that will lead to this end that I stand here today and move it.

Thus the good cause moves along. Ponsonby in the English Parliament, Borah in the American Congress, both calling for uncompromising action. Ponsonby for Disarmament, Borah for Outlawry. Each supplementing the other. The question of the utter abolition of war is placed squarely before the conscience of the world; and it will not down until it is answered right.

CURTIS W. REESE.

Purple and Gold Delight

I know a study set in the midst of a garden, in the heart of the city.

It is an isolated building of one room—entirely English in its atmosphere. It can be entered on either side, from the garden, through a pergola covered with wisteria and grape-vines. At the back of the room is a huge fireplace, where only wood is burned. The wood-work is of rough oak, contrasting sharply with the deep cream of the walls. Wooden beams span the vaulted ceiling. Book shelves line two sides of the wall and there is a desk and a closet, containing wash stand and place for garden tools.

Purple rugs lie upon the floor; the wicker furniture is painted black, and cushions and curtains are of purple and gold chintz.

But the best comes last—as it always should. The windows, opposite the fireplace look upon a formal garden.

Now, purple and golden iris nod their heads in the garden; purple and golden pansies cluster beneath the trees. Golden hemeracolis and purple monks-hood stand side by side, and seem to try to peep into this enchanted study.

Later, it will be no less beautiful for the golden lilies and the purple vervain, the golden ranunclus and purple asters follow soon, and the purple grapes will hang from the pergola where now the wisteria droops.

The songs of the birds and the sound of trickling water enter the room, borne on flower-scented breezes.

Do you wonder that this is called "The Study of Purple and Gold Delight"?

H. S. N.

Why We Are Weary

I am a "tired radical." A patient and long suffering one, I think, but there are limits to the endurance of even the most meek and weary of us. Clarence R. Skinner's "Tempted Radicals" in the March 28th, 1927, UNITY was not more smug and "holier than thou" than most of the "tired radical" effusions that appear in chastely liberal publications. It is perhaps unfair to him, but it was the "last straw" with me, and for the good of my own soul I am going to remind Mr. Skinner of a few unpleasant truths whose telling will possibly brand me forever as a "tempted radical," who has fallen. He voices very sweetly the chidings that trip so easily from the typewriters of the radicals whose lives have been spent in steam-heated apartments, and whose most strenuous radicalism is expressed in attending one of Eugene O'Neil's plays, and discussing it at length in a Greenwich Village studio.

I chanced to have lived through the three periods of radicalism in the United States which he mentions. My grandfather was the son of an aristocratic, slave owning Kentucky family. In his college days he became a radical "Abolitionist," turned his back on all that might have been his, and with his young bride traveled out to Kansas to wage the "free soil" struggle. What his radicalism meant to the bride has never been written, and never can be. I was only a child when the wife of this untiring radical laid down the burden and found rest and peace in a wind-swept, prairie grave, but I read something of the stark tragedy in her weary, worn and beautiful old face. My grandfather? Oh! he was murdered by a "copperhead," and my grandmother was left to rear her children in the wilds of Kansas in the '60's.

When the Civil War came my father was only fourteen, too young to carry a musket, but he became the drummer-boy of the 8th Kansas Volunteer Infantry and served during the entire period of the war. At its close he was a young, enthusiastic radical, so he took his young bride and traveled out to the frontier and helped to build the state of Kansas. He led in the fight for schools, and in the Farmer's Alliance and the Populist Party. Whenever there was hard, grinding work to do it fell to the lot of Andrew Richards, but if there were honors or emoluments they went to others less radical. He helped to build the Socialist Party also, and died full of good works, but poor in worldly goods, and a very tired radical. Possibly because when he came to die he had some misgivings concerning what his family had been forced to endure and forego because he was a radical.

I followed in his footsteps, and so far as I can remember there has not been much in the world of radicalism in this country in which I have not had a part. I never flattered myself that it was either beauty or brilliancy that gave me my place in the Socialist movement. It was an iron constitution and the sort of grit that made is possible for me to work longer hours, travel harder roads, eat worse food, talk to larger crowds, and do more of the "dirty work" of the organization than any man. It was the blind loyalty to a "cause" that made it possible for me to put the radical movement before even my motherhood, and to raise my children with one hand while I served the Socialist movement with the other, and most of my brain and soul, that brought me what was grudgingly accepted by the men in the organization as a certain status of "leadership."

And that so-called leadership made me the chairman of the committee that wrote the Socialist Party War Manifesto, and also made me the first victim of the "Espionage Act." I merely stood by the position taken by the Party by referendum vote, yet when I came to trial at Bismarck, North Dakota, the Socialist press had not a single representative in the court-room, and the "liberal" and pseudo-radical publications were silent as the tomb.

The famous radical lawyer who had been hired and paid to conduct my defense was too busy to do so, and not a man or woman of the radical movements with whom I had worked for years had the courage to face the trial with me. I went through it absolutely alone, and when it was finished I was beginning to be a "tired radical."

Oh! yes, I had legal defense. Possibly as able and loyal as any legal defense could have been in those mad days of 1917. But the lawyer who risked everything to defend me was not a radical, not one of the men with whom I had worked for years. He was a conservative of the conservatives, pro-war to his heart's core, one of the leaders of the mob that had driven Max Eastman out of Fargo, North Dakota, a few months previous. He was a man who had nothing in common with me or my theories, beliefs or activities. He was simply a decent sort of a conservative with old-fashioned loyalty to what he felt to be the ethics of his profession.

I went to prison, and the great majority of my radical associates promptly forgot me. For more than a year after I went to prison not a single communication ever came to me from the National Office of the Socialist Party, and no official ever visited me. When it was necessary to secure data on which to base the efforts for my release it was Prof. William Edward Zeuch, an instructor at Cornell University, who made the survey, and it was only by the most bitter battle that a radical organization for whom I had raised thousands of dollars was induced to pay $100 of the expenses incurred. And it was the Church Federation of Chicago, using Prof. Zeuch's data, that secured the commutation of my sentence.

When I was released there were three things I pledged myself to do: secure the release of the other political prisoners, get a Federal prison for women, and drive the prison labor contractors out of our penal institutions.

There were about twenty poor, obscure and helpless tenant farmers from Oklahoma and Texas in the Federal prison at Leavenworth for whose welfare no organization was responsible. They were not members of the Socialist Party, the Industrial Workers of the World, nor the American Federation of Labor. Their puny Farmer's Union had been crushed, and all radicals were too busy to pay any attention to them.

Something dramatic had to be done to jar the jaded public mind, and the Children's Crusade for Amnesty was launched. My husband and myself, assisted by Dorothy Clark and Martha Reeder, wives of two of the prisoners, raised the funds, rounded up about fifty women and children of the prisoner's fami-

lies, and with them made the long trek across the country to Washington. And with our tatterdemalion army we sat on the steps of the White House until the last man was released.

When the last man was free I dragged myself home, perhaps the most tired radical that ever lived. The physical effort of the undertaking, not to mention the terrific tax on heart and soul, was something beyond the power of expression, and I was unutterably weary in body, brain and soul when I returned home and found that our business had been wrecked by long neglect. My only daughter had been at death's door in a hospital most of the time I had been sitting on the White House steps, but I could not leave the women and children of my tragic flock to go to her, and none of my radical associates thought of doing so. A convention of the Socialist Party was held while the Children's Crusade was in Washington, and I was excommunicated by it. My membership in the organization which I had helped to build, and to which I had given about all that makes life worth while to a woman, canceled my membership, because I had acted contrary to the advice of an official.

I forced the issue of the Federal Reformatory for Women, furnished most of the publicity and practically all the data necessary to compel action by Congress. All sorts of chastely radical women have come to me for specialized knowledge, assistance and advice, but none have ever suggested that my services or training be recognized openly, or mentioned in their social circles.

I have given every possible moment of time and every ounce of energy to the study of our penal system, and the possibilities of scientific reorganization, since the day of my release. No one has ever suggested that I am not sane and scientifically sound in the work I have done, and have unusual training for doing, but will any semi or pseudo-radical prison reform organization permit me to give my trained services? Nay verily! I am called on for all sorts of help, but it is never acknowledged, nor am I even given credit for it.

A most amusing experience came to me within the last few months. During my time in Jefferson City a society woman became interested in the prison, and because she had money and social position and no interesting job, has been doing some really good work in interesting others in the Missouri prison situation. I chanced to be driving through a city where a Prison League luncheon was being held. It was a public affair, so I bought my ticket and took a seat as much in the background as possible. When the dear lady who had become interested in prisons through me, and who had been using materials I supplied for years in her work, discovered my presence her horror and consternation was extremely amusing, and terribly tragic. "Horrors! How terrible for a real, live ex-convict to attend a prison reform luncheon!" I soon realized the enormity of my crime, and withdrew my contaminating presence, but I doubt if the poor lady has ever been the same. The shock was too much for her.

The United States Chamber of Commerce, the U. S. Department of Commerce and the U. S. Department of Justice are all glad to have my co-operation in making studies of prison and crime problems. Hard-boiled politicians and businessmen interested only in the economic phases of penology and law administration accept me as a sound and well trained specialist in my line, and they are willing to pay good, hard cash for my work. But will any respectable radical publication use anything I write? Not so you can notice it! Will any of the people who bewail the "tired radical" give me a job that would keep me from starvation? They will not!

But the despised conservatives do. Men who have nothing but amused contempt for my radicalism know that I know the prison problems of this country, and they are willing to pay good, hard cash in comfortable sums for the services I can give them. Magazines interested in nothing but cash receipts know that I can discuss crime and its causes in a style which appeals to the man in the street, and they don't care a hoot about my past record. The School of Commerce of the University of Illinois is keenly interested in what I have to say about the money cost of crime, but I have a picture of the consternation that would send shivers down the spine of Mr. Skinner, or any organization with which he might be connected at the mere thought of me being invited to appear in its radical midst.

Yes, I am very, very tired, and the thing that makes me most tired of all is the sweet way in which broad-minded, pure-souled tolerant radicals meet a "radical" like myself. I know exactly how a Negro feels when the same sort of radicals set about making him feel at home in their midst. I remember speaking at the Community Church Forum in New York, and the overwhelming flood of sweetness left me choked and gasping for weeks. I was not an ordinary human being with some specialized knowledge of a great social problem that might be helpful to others. I was an ex-convict and the pathetic efforts to demonstrate the tolerant attitude of radicals for a "radical" like me, not only made me very tired, but aroused an unholy desire to indulge in some good, husky profanity.

I am very much awake, particularly to the fact that I must earn my bread by my own labor, and that the only people who will permit me to earn it are not radicals. It is a Chrysler that is the badge of my fallen state. I earned it working for hard-boiled conservatives while radicals would have watched me starve with sweet, Christian resignation. And, "who among you shall cast the first stone" at this "tempted radical"?

KATE RICHARDS O'HARE.

[From Mr. Skinner]

To the Editor of UNITY:

Thank you for sending me the letter from Mrs. Kate Richards O'Hare, which I have read with intense interest and sympathy. There is little for me to say further than to call attention to one or two points.

First, I think that radicals are very apt to be impersonal in their work, and thus they often seem and possibly are lacking in gratitude. Mrs. O'Hare's experience seems to bear out this generalization. The important thing is not to let bitternes possess our souls when we find that we are not as much appreciated as we ought to be. The case of Jesus praying for the forgiveness of his enemies is the classical and heroic example. But I do not blame Mrs. O'Hare for the human outcry against it.

Secondly, I shall not attempt any defense of my own "smugness" further than to state that I was chairman of the League for Democratic Control which gave Mrs. O'Hare one of her first opportunities to speak after coming from prison.

CLARENCE R. SKINNER.

Shall Massachusetts Commit Judicial Murder?

The Supreme Court of Massachusetts for the second time has spoken. It has once more said that Judge Webster Thayer was legally correct in his rulings in the Sacco-Vanzetti Case, and that the Supreme Court is unable to consider independently the evidence on which he passed. Even Madeiros's confession that he had taken part in the South Braintree crime, and that neither Sacco nor Vanzetti participated therein—even the evidence of former associates that Madeiros's participation in the crime was well known by his companions and that he had often declared that sooner than let men wrongly accused go to the chair he himself would make confession,—even this new evidence is not to be submitted to a jury. Judge Thayer is the only tribunal which had a look in at this and at a whole mass of evidence discovered since the original trial, held in June and July of 1921. "It is not imperative," said the opinion, "that a new trial be granted, even though the evidence is newly discovered, and, if presented to a jury would justify a different verdict."

Sacco and Vanzetti, thus adjudged guilty of two murders committed more than seven years ago, were sentenced on April 9th to death in the electric chair upon some day during the week beginning July 10, 1927. Each of the men spoke in simple burning words, declaring their innocence of the crime of which they stood accused. Sacco's remarks were brief and were much hampered by being forced to be spoken in a foreign language. His closing words were:

> I forgot one thing which my comrade remember me, As I said before, Judge Thayer know all my life, and he knew that I am never been guilty, never,—not yesterday nor today nor forever.

Vanzetti spoke for forty-two minutes. His closing words were:

> Well, I have already say that I am not guilty of these two crimes, that I never commit a crime in my life,—I have never steal and I have never kill and I have never spilt blood, and I have fought against the crime, and I have fought and I have sacrificed myself even to eliminate the crimes that the law and the church legitimate and sanctify.
>
> This is what I say: I would not wish to a dog or to a snake, to the most low and misfortunate creature of the earth —I would not wish to any of them what I have had to suffer for things I am not guilty of. But my conviction is that I have suffered for things that I am guilty of. I am suffering because I am a radical, and indeed I am a radical; I have suffered because I am an Italian, and indeed I am an Italian; I have suffered more for my family and for my beloved than for myself; but I am so convinced to be right that if you could execute me two times, and if I could be reborn two other times, I would live again to do again what I have done already.

On April 6, 1927, the day on which the opinion of the Supreme Court was announced, Vanzetti wrote to a friend:

> Your good letter has reached me just now. Yes, as far as our lives and freedom are concerned, all has been vain. I am now confined in a cell of Cherry Hill wing, antechamber of the death house, waiting for my doom. And I have no illusions.
>
> But yours and our comrades and friends' solidarity and generosity has written a wonderful paragraph in history. It helped us and it will safe other—it will never have been done in vain.
>
> Be patient and of brave heart, and have all my good wishes and affection.

On April 10, William E. Hocking, Professor of Philosophy in Harvard College, gave a striking address from the platform of the Community Church, Symphony Hall, Boston, explaining why the opinion of the Supreme Court could not allay doubts as to the merits of the case. He himself, he stated, remained persuaded that Sacco and Vanzetti were as innocent of the crime for which they had been sentenced to death, as he himself was.

> Thus the incredible, the essentially disgraceful situation that men may be sent to their death in Massachusetts because the courts refuse to hear relevant evidence. . . . It is an appalling thing to see a great State, in the full exercise of its faculties, steer deliberately toward an act of profound and irrevocable injustice. . . . If the courts fail in this will to justice, the conscience of men must make itself heard. . . . The real enemies of the state are those who defend the indefensible, who refuse to acknowledge the error obvious to all thoughtful men, and who reject that primary concern for justice without which no law is worthy of respect and no state worthy of obedience.

In view of the belief of multitudes of persons that the sentence cries out against the evidence on which it should rest, petitions are in circulation praying the Governor to appoint a commission empowered to examine all the facts in the case. Similarly letters and telegrams are being sent to the Governor from the world over, both from individuals and from organizations urging that suitable measures be taken to save the State of Massachusetts from closing its eyes in the act of committing a judicial murder.

Be it remembered that July 10, 1927, is the date set for the execution.

Boston, Mass. ELIZABETH GLENDOWER EVANS.

An Exhibit

The Pasadena *Evening Post* is one of our typical chauvinistic American newspapers. It is narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant of all opinion contrary to its own, and scared to death of radicalism. A valued friend sent the Editor a copy of UNITY which got under his skin, and the appended editorial is the result.

This editorial has brought us profound satisfaction. It proves, first, that UNITY is effective. It proves, secondly, that UNITY has a mission to fulfil. So long as such a paper as the *Evening Post* and such un-American people as it represents live and thrive in this country, UNITY has work to do.

Danger Spots

It is with reluctance that the periodical *Unity* is mentioned. There is regret in the very fact that a publication so unpatriotic, un-American, and so grossly devoted to perversion of the truth, has a following sufficient to keep it in existence. Yet in a sense, *Unity* is ably edited, with a total lack of conscience, and an insouciant waiving of any fact that might tend to embarrass it.

A marked copy comes to hand. Perhaps, it is worse than the ordinary issue, for in the influence that it seeks to convey it lends to the full such strength as may lie in bolshevist propaganda. It is frankly the organ of bolshevism. Therefore it has no legitimate place in a land the institutions of which would crumble were the dreadful doctrines of brutal and murderous and empoisoned Moscow to prevail within its borders. Morally the publication is at the level of the bomb-thrower.

There are current many sermons, editorials and preachments against intolerance. People are told that each has a right to his opinion and to the expression of it. There is much truth in this, and yet there are limits to a proper toleration.

Carried to extreme, tolerance would deprive society of the right to protest against crime. It has the right and duty of protesting against crime. Therefore it may protest against the agencies of evil, as well as against evil itself. Because of this, *Unity* deserves rebuke and condemnation; it is the agency of an evil that threatens the world.

Less attention would be evoked by receipt of this number save that it comes copiously marked with the approval of a follower of the malign cult it represents.

In the leading article there is an endeavor to point to the danger spots of the world "as viewed from the standpoint of war and peace." It mentions Italy, where the strong Mussolini has matters well in hand. It mentions Russia, "which is dangerous not so much in herself as in the isolation forced upon her by the hostile nations of the west which seem now deliberately minded to provoke her."

At this palpable and stupid falsehood it is well to reflect an instant. No isolation has been forced upon Russia. The soviets have declared war on all the world. Civilization has heard the hiss and rattle of the coiled snake; and civilization has refrained from contact. If the oligarchy ruling Russia was composed of individuals of brains and character instead of brutalized and venomous thugs venturing into the sea of diplomacy, Russia could be as other nations. Their presence makes this hopeless. Not until they have been eliminated and exterminated can a ray of light enter the benighted land they hold in thrall.

The nations charged with forcing isolation upon Russia have treated that monstrosity with undeserved consideration. The time may yet come when respectable peoples everywhere, instead of ignoring Russia may in self defense have to denounce it as an international outlaw, and make common cause against it. It truly is one of the world's danger spots, and is so because of deliberate choice.

Continuing, *Unity* mentions China, Mexico, Haiti, Nicaragua and the Balkans, all but the last as destined to "bring the United States to death-grips with the whole Latin-American world."

Unity's own beloved bolshevists are responsible for much of the trouble in China, Mexico and Nicaragua. Happily, however, it is far less serious than the disloyal and illogical editor hopes.

The Study Table

"Elmer Gantry"

Sinclair Lewis's latest and most sensational novel, "Elmer Gantry," bids fair to be the best seller of all best sellers, because it attacks one of the most sensitively class-conscious of all our social groups, the ministers. When Mr. Lewis turned his scathing irony upon the business men in "Babbit," he was dealing with a somewhat defenseless victim. Before the fine shot of his sarcasm a "Babbit" is a rabbit. The business men were inarticulate, but the clergy are voluble. So Mr. Lewis has upwards of two hundred thousand salesmen working for him, without salary and without commission, who are denouncing him and his book in swollen rhetoric that shows an apoplectic purple. And there is nothing that sells a book like denunciation. To fight anything objectionable with silence is a trick that reformers and ministers rarely learn. Their nervous systems center in the organ of speech, and their natural response to stimuli is to vociferate.

The book-reviewers have been little less hectic than the ministers in their hair-trigger pronouncements. If the reviews that have already appeared were collected into a volume, I dare say it would exceed in bulk even the 432 pages of Mr. Lewis's long and amazing novel.

Under these circumstances, with the ministers pounding their pulpits furiously and the book-reviewers pounding their typewriters feverishly, how can "Elmer Gantry" fail of being the world's best seller in fiction—next to the Bible?

Elmer Gantry, not the hero, but the central villain of the story, is presented to us standing before a bar in a saloon, drunk. When we see him last, he is standing in his pulpit praying, and as he prays, noting a new singer in the choir, with "charming ankles and lively eyes." These two strokes of felicitous description give us the key to his character, which is one of the most odious in all literature. Elmer Gantry, Uriah Heep, and Judas Iscariot, like the memebrs of another trinity, are equal in all their powers. In villainy they are like the debaters of whom Lincoln judiciously declared that "the contestants did mutually excel."

In the course of his adventures from a husky, low-brow, rum-loving, woman-chasing football player in a small denominational college in the Middle West to his vision of himself as an unregenerate Anthony Comstock on a national scale, Elmer Gantry is in succession a Baptist theological seminary student, a traveling salesman, chief assistant to a neurotic woman evangelist, a colleague of an applied psychologist and cult-leader, then an applied psychologist on his own hook, next a Methodist preacher, who by bluff, blarney, and bravado rises from one place of prominence to another until he is to become not only minister of a wealthy New York church, but president of the National Association for the Purification of Art and the Press, whose function is to "make these United States a moral nation."

And all the while, from start to finish, he is a prurient, lustful, scheming, selfish, and almost conscienceless mucker and cad. There is hardly a relieving flash of nobility in all the stinking murk of his character. He is the incarnation in one person of nearly all the contemptible traits of the ministry, the summation of all the diffused and sporadic wickedness of the clergy in one man. No wonder the book is sensational and the ministers call it vile.

Lewis overlooked some of the ministry's vulnerable points, but he centered his fire with uncanny precision upon what is often the minister's greatest weakness and at the same time often his greatest strength, namely an attraction to and an attraction for women. This is not scandal, it is psychology. That the relationship between religion and sex has long been realized is shown in the studied attempts of the monastic orders to devise rules for the subjection of sex. The words of Jesus "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," are truer still when they are reversed, for even when the spirit is unwilling, the flesh is strong. In fact a reasonable amount of imperfection is a good thing for a minister. It saves, or should save, him from spiritual pride.

But Elmer Gantry doesn't have a reasonable amount, he has all that his creator could scrape together by ransacking the files of old newspaper reports of clerical scandals, and all he could learn by prowling about parsonages in the guise of a book-agent. And so Elmer is the world's supreme scoundrel in a Prince Albert coat, the most bumptious, blatant, bullying, braggart that ever beat on a Bible, the most lecherous, leering, libertine that ever languished over a lady; the most

hypocritical humbug that ever polluted a pulpit. His specialty is seduction. His career is one spasm of sexuality after another.

It is this which has led defenders of the cloth and denouncers of the novel to say that Elmer Gantry is a caricature, a saw-dust dummy, a man of straw, a convenient vehicle through which Lewis voices his venom against the professional promulgators of religion.

It is doubtless true that no minister quite so atrocious as Gantry ever trailed his sinuous slimy way through American churches. He may be a little overdrawn. But even so, he is merely the assembling of authentic parts. The whole character may be a fiction and a caricature, but the parts of which it is composed are unfortunately and sadly genuine. This is proved by that truly frightful record presented by Franklin Steiner in his book, "Crimes of Preachers." The general effect of Steiner's book is to give the impression that ministers are probably no more moral or law-abiding than other social classes. The record would further indicate that while apparently there is no crime to which ministers are immune, sex crimes are those to which they are most addicted. These furnish 1769 cases out of a total of 4987. Evidently Sinclair Lewis has a foundation in fact for making Elmer Gantry's chief vice to be a raging and uncontrolled sexuality.

"Elmer Gantry" is not a pleasant book, not a great book, but it is a salutary book,—and it is most salutary for the ministers themselves. Sinclair Lewis by his novel has become a preacher to preachers.

As a relief from "Elmer Gantry," I suggest that the reader treat himself to that delightful, whimsical, thought-provoking novel by Sylvia Townsend Warner, "Mr. Fortune's Maggot." Its hero is a minister also, but a very different and a more convincing type.

New York City. A. WAKEFIELD SLATEN.

Correspondence

Mohammedanism and Unitarianism

[An Interview with Pere Hyacinthe.]

Editor of UNITY:

Mr. Thompson's very interesting article on Charles Hyacinthe Loyson ("Pere Hyacinthe") in the UNITY of April 4, omitted to mention one important matter which I am sure will interest some of the readers of UNITY. Pere Hyacinthe in his unique journey and mission of Brotherhood among the Mohammedan peoples of Northern Africa, found to his surprise and gratification that there is one form of Christianity which is regarded with favor among the more intelligent Islamic leaders, namely, Unitarianism, especially as it exists in America and is represented in the writings of Dr. Channing. The very interesting book mentioned by Mr. Thompson ("To Jerusalem Thorugh the Lands of Islam," by Madame Hyacinthe Loyson) which describes Pere Hyacinthe's journey and mission, tells at some length of this interest in Channing and Unitarianism which he discovered.

I am prompted the more to call attention to this discovery of Pere Hyacinthe because it happened that I received an account of the same at the time from his own lips.

After travelling through most of the lands of Northern Africa,—Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli and Egypt,—and putting himself into the closest and most sympathetic possible relations with the Mohammedan peoples and leaders everywhere, Pere Hyacinthe and his wife reached Jerusalem in the early spring of 1896, and there made an extended visit.

It so happened that at that time I myself was spending two weeks in Jerusalem, on my return from my first visit to India. Pere Hyacinthe, learning through his American wife (with whom I happened to have some acquaintance), that I was in the city, sent for me for an interview, on purpose to tell me of his remarkable experiences with the Mohammedans, and especially to send by me a message to the Unitarians of America regarding the interest which he had found among their educated men and leaders in the Unitarian movement and especially in Dr. Channing.

Our interview was a long and delightful one. The great preacher inquired eagerly about leading Unitarians in America and in England, and about the progress and prospects of the Unitarian cause. But above everything he emphasized the open door which he assured me he had found for our Gospel.

He declared that he had been impressed everywhere he went with the conviction that the one and only form of Christianity that could get any interested and sympathetic hearing among Mohammedans was Unitarianism, or, as he liked to call it, "the religion of Channing." He was amazed to find that Channing was so well known among educated Mohammedans. Not a few longer or shorter parts of Channing's writing had been translated into Arabic and widely circulated; and everywhere they had attracted great attention and won favor by their breadth and lofty spirituality. "Channing," he affirmed, "is the one great Christian prophet of the modern world who has a message for Islam,—the one Christian prophet to whom Mohammedans will listen." "Tell the Unitarians of America and of England," said Pere Hyacinthe to me over and over with great earnestness, "to send missionaries with Channing's gospel to the Moslems. They will receive a warm welcome, and they can do untold good." Again and again he declared: "My extensive experience shows that the Christianity of Channing is the one form of religion that can give to the Mohammedan world the spiritual quickening and regeneration which it needs, and which its best minds are dimly reaching out after."

I am all the more glad to recall and to give the readers of UNITY this experience and this message of Pere Hyacinthe, because they accord so perfectly with much that I myself have seen and experienced in my travels in various parts of the Mohammedan Orient.

In conclusion, let me say that for persons who desire to get an inside view of Mohammedanism—an understanding of the ideals, the spirit, and the deeper and truer religious life of those who are its best representatives—I do not know of a book that they can read with more profit than the really fascinating volume of Madame Hyacinthe Loyson, to which Mr. Thompson in his excellent article introduced us. The book is published by the Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago.

J. T. SUNDERLAND.

Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

International Fellowships Federation

Editor of UNITY:

Mr. Doremus Scudder sent to me a copy of UNITY of Monday, the 22nd of November, in which there is an article on "Some Geneva Gains" by himself. Mr. Scudder passed through Madras about a fortnight ago and we had him speak to the Madras International Fellowship on "The Institute of Pacific Relations." And we in turn told him something about the Internatianal Fellowship Movement in India started about five years ago.

I dare say you will be interested to know something about the International Fellowship Movement, particularly because it stands for the same goal as yours, namely, unity. We try to achieve it by bringing together people divided on any account.

The Fellowship was first started in Madras in July, 1922, and ever since it has been growing in strength and influence. Just now we have ten such local International Fellowships in Madras, Calcutta, Agra, Bombay, Gooty, Chittoor, Ranipet, Vellore, Jalarpet and Masulipatam. And plans are being made by friends in several other places to start Fellowships.

These local Fellowships went on independently of one another till last October. In October, 1925, we had a Conference of the secretaries of the several local Fellowships and a few others and we considered in an informal way the desirability of federating these scattered and unrelated

The Field

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."

H. N. BRAILSFORD ON RUSSIA

There is no more intelligent and trustworthy observer in the world today than Mr. H. N. Brailsford, of England. This distinguished publicist traveled extensively in Russia in 1920, and wrote the most important book of that day on the Soviets—"The Russian Workers Republic." Now Mr. Brailsford is in Russia again, and he is reporting his observations in the *New Leader* (London) and the Baltimore *Sun*. Here are some extracts from his articles. Referring to a visit to Vladimir, a town of Central Russia, he says:

"In 1920, two or three shops were open for a few hours daily and then the shutters went up to signify that their stocks had given out. Today every shop is open and crowded and every window is full of goods. Then one counted the rare peasants' carts in the streets. Now the crowding sledges dash at breakneck speed, for the horses are young and well-fed. Then one saw young men only in the regiments which assembled here to march to the Crimea for the last struggle of the Civil War. Now the young men are civilians once more. One meets them in the van of every public activity and their energy has quickened the pace of life and thought. Then there was but one topic of conversation—food. A distracted administration counted day by day the grain that was left for distribution. Good citizens struggled to supplement their siege—rations through the lawful channel of the co-operatives. Less scrupulous citizens bribed and intrigued and smuggled and speculated to satisfy their gnawing hunger. Now no one mentions food unless it be to invite the guest to an abundant table. The haunting look of anxiety is gone; the children who play in the snow are round-faced and chubby. There is an endless round of amusement—from solemn debates to cinemas—in club and theaters of the little town. Life is cheerful and even jolly * * *. Politics in our sense of the word have vanished from Russia * * *. The whole public activity of the Communist Party is turned to constructive tasks. Each Soviet, from Moscow to the remotest village, has one practical goal before it—to increase the output of industry and to draw richer harvests from the soil. These are the policies of the bee-hive * * *. Russia is bent upon these concrete tasks with a hopeful concentration that is unique in this world of ours. She is still poor. She is still backward. With all that she has done she has not yet raised herself within sight of the West-European level. But the rate and promise of her relative progress stagger an observer who saw her plight, as I saw it in 1920. Then the big cotton mill stood still—there was no cotton to spin. Now a vast new mill, spacious, well-ventilated and well-equipped, has risen near the old one. Both are now running on electric power instead of steam. The creche has expanded and trained nurses attend to the children in a building as spacious as it is spotlessly clean. A doctor educated in France, one of a staff of twelve, showed me over a model dispensary and the permanent hospital—nothing better in the West. A co-operative restaurant, seating thousands of workers, is just opened. An ingenious mechanical filter purifies the river water, which formerly, with all its impurities, was the only supply. The wooden theater is gone and in its place is a big hall and club of brick, with classrooms, library and gymnasium. The barrack-prison dwelling which used to house families is now clean and well lit, but it houses only single men. For families there have risen block after block of well-built flats and a garden village is growing in the forest. The transformation seemed to me miraculous. It would be creditable to the wealthy West. It is a portent in poor Russia. Peasant life, indeed, has gone back, with many important exceptions, to the old individualism. But the industry is still nationalized; all its profits go to the community. In both these factories, the old as well as the new, the director is a former workman. At their side are the elected factory committee which discuss all grievances with the management, make suggestions for the more efficient working of the factory and control all its social institutions. It is a working model of the new Russia. The will of its workers govern it. They are working with a new zeal and a new pride, partly because the new order satisfies their self-respect and partly because the whole fruit of their labor returns to them. All new buildings have been constructed from the profits of the industry. Not less than ten per cent of the profits go to promoting workers' welfare. Last year it was twenty-two per cent. There are 8,000 workers in these two factories. They are developing a fine social ambition. Everywhere I see the same kind of thing—the coming of electricity, the expansion of industry and even in poor villages the sudden outbreak of the passion for reconstruction and progress."

THE FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION

Fall Conference of the F. O. R.

Subject: American Imperialism and Its Cure.

Time: Thursday to Sunday, Sept. 8-11, 1927.

Place: Ocean Hotel, Asbury Park, N. J.

This announcement is made now so that members and others can make their plans to be present. It is the big question before the American people today, and the sessions of the Conference are being planned to bring out ways in which the menace which imperialism holds for the peace of the world can be met by fellowship methods. The detailed program will be issued later.

No words are needed in regard to the place. The hotel is half a block from the ocean, and the program will be arranged to leave ample time for

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local Fellowships. That Conference made a recommendation that they should be federated and recommended that an official conference of the Fellowships should be held in October, 1926.

Accordingly in October, 1926, we had a Conference of the representatives of the local Fellowships in Pulmaner. At that Conference we decided to federate all the existing Fellowships under the name "The International Fellowship Federation." This Federation is to be controlled by a Council consisting of two elected representatives from each of the affiliated local Fellowships and a few coopted members. You will be glad to learn that Manhatma Gandhi has very kindly accepted membership on this Council as a coopted member. (I am sending your printed Reports of both the Retreat of October, 1925, and of October, 1926.) I feel sure that you will be interested to read them.

The purpose of the Fellowship is to promote goodwill and harmony among people who are divided by religious, social, economic, political and other differences and the one unifying principle, or if I may call it, the basis of the Fellowship is the Belief in God as the highest incentive to human brotherhood.

In our Fellowships, we have Hindus (Brahmins, non-Brahmins and members of the untouchable classes), Mussalmans, Indian Christians, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Europeans and Americans, men and women, and people following different walks of life, such as merchants, bankers, educationists, religious workers, etc. So you see it is a very comprehensive movement including in it all sorts and conditions of people.

Perhaps the most outstanding thing in the programme of these local Fellowships is the annual Retreat (religious retreat) which they hold. Recently we had the fourth Annual Retreat of the Madras Fellowship at which the two important questions we considered were "Communal Tensions" and "Religious Education in Schools and Colleges." The report of this Retreat will be published in the May issue of the "International Fellowship," our official organ, and so I shall not write much about it just now. But I am sending you a copy of the meditations we used for this Retreat, both meditations for personal use and for corporate use.

I have referred to our official organ. It is called "The International Fellowship" and is at present issued once in every two months. It used to be a quarterly publication, but at Pulmaner we decided to issue it every two months and we are hoping to make it into a monthly before long. I am sending you a copy of that also.

If I may use one word, cooperation is the key word of the Fellowship, cooperation between people belonging to different religions, different professions, different communities, etc., for we believe that more can be done by this method than by any other method.

Madras, India. A. A. Paul.

informal conferences on boardwalk and beach. The rates will be $3.00 per day for room and board or $1.00 for room only, with plenty of restaurants handy. There will be special gatherings of the Youth Section.

International Youth Camp, Switzerland

The International F. O. R. extends an invitation to members of the Youth Section to join a Youth Camp to be held from the 3rd to the 10th of August at Vaumarcus, in French Switzerland. The subject will be "St. Francis and the Youth of Europe."

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF YOUTH

A festival of youth, to which will be invited representatives from a large number of foreign nations, is being planned by the League of Nations Union in England, according to a recent communication from E. E. Barnett, Organizing Director. It will be held at the Crystal Palace in London on June 18.

"The League of Nations Union movement in this country," Mr. Barnett writes, "is alive to the fact that armaments are the chief obstacle to good will and peace among the nations, and my executive will make a point of emphasizing this fact from the platform, by posters, and possibly by a scene in the pageant play at the festival."

The stated object of this festival is to strengthen the League of Nations movement among the youth. Mr. Barnett extends to all American students who may be in England at the time of the festival a cordial invitation to attend it. Features of the program include a pageant of nations, in which representatives of the foreign legations in London will be invited to participate, a concert by a choir of 5,000 young people, athletics, and sideshows including a fair, fireworks, tableaux, and an exhibition of dances.

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